



Southern California
Regional Transit
Training Consortium
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California Environmental Protection Agency
Air Resources Board (ARB)
Cal/EPA Headquarters Building
1001 I Street
Sacramento CA 95814

ATTENTION: Mary Nichols, Chair

RE: Second Investment Plan and Draft Funding Guidelines

Dear Chair Nichols:

The Southern California Regional Transit Training Consortium (SCR TTC) provided input in August to the ARB workshop held in San Diego indicating, 'As ARB identifies the priorities of the Second Investment Plan and Draft Funding Guidelines for Agencies Administering California Climate Investments and focuses on the 40% of Cap and Trade 'Discretionary Funding', the SCR TTC implores your consideration for eligibility inclusion of the current unfunded expense of Advanced Technology Transit Training.'

This request was reiterated at the ARB Second Investment Plan workshop recently held November 5th in Los Angeles and hosted at Caltrans headquarters with verbal testimony provided by SCR TTC's Training Director in greater detail and in alignment with your comments from the October 22nd webinar Joint Session hosted concurrently in Sacramento and Diamond Bar. The following testimony verbatim is herein also provided as written inclusion within the November 13th deadline to submit public comments:

My name is Nina Babiarz, Training Director and Founding Member of the SCR TTC; comprised of 45 members; 30 Transit Agencies and fifteen (15) Academic members.

My primary objective in speaking this evening is to talk about how imperative an ARB investment of 40% Cap-and-Trade **Discretionary funds** is to the California transit industry in order to meet the climate change emission reduction targets that have been set in the ARB strategies to achieve its goals.

So I'll talk about the SCR TTC, its training and our unique request for discretionary funds in a moment, but first I want to take you back to the ARB October 22nd webinar Joint Session hosted in Sacramento and Diamond Bar and the closing remarks ARB Chair Mary Nichols made just prior to her departure. I made the commute from San Diego for these few moments of comment because I was inspired by the specific direction Chair Nichols outlined to the Air Resources Board members that day and I quote:

'Pieces of the investment and funding plan should be open to revisions. ARB should be open to input on the whole system of things in order to be adaptive to the advancing technologies. The ARB funding plan needs to be on the cutting edge of these new requirements in order to respond to them. ARB should elevate discussions with the transits during this period of transformation.'

Nichols went on to say that: 'follow-up of the ARB Workshops should include drilling down to the details and also that the early evolution of the Electric Bus in our transit industry is way behind the advancements made by the auto industry.' So I'm here today to help 'elevate the ARB discussion with the transits' per Chair Nichols encouragement.



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Training specific to the transit industry is THE overarching and critical component for ARB to ensure the attainment goals that are set are met. The significant technical advancements in zero emission buses come with training and educational challenges and I believe a perfect example of ‘the whole system of things’ and the funding gap that Chair Nichols eluded to when suggesting a broader dialogue to be opened up with the transits.

Although SCR TTC welcomes the recent addition of ‘Training/Developing the Workforce’ now included as a ‘Project Objective’ in the Zero-Emission Truck & Bus Pilot solicitation, SCR TTC contends that ARB may possibly be missing the mark.

The training required to keep the transit technicians current with these rapidly advancing technologies may not always be quantifiable and meet the GHG Reduction funding criteria. Perhaps it would be more responsive ‘in order to be adaptive to the advancing technologies’ for the ARB to broaden its perspective and revise the 40% Discretionary Cap-and-Trade funds to include transit industry workforce development as an eligible investment in the human resources required to ensure the ARB goals are achieved.

The training needed for the transit industry technology transformation underway represents exactly the type of funding plan as Chair Nichols indicates may be needed for ARB on the to be on the cutting edge of these new requirements in order to respond to them. The training needed is NOT just project specific, although project specific training is also required to meet some individual specific workforce skills updates as well.

‘Training/Developing the Workforce’ should also be an ARB overarching goal. A training, workforce development and educational investment that simultaneously transcends all 3 of the ARB Greenhouse Gas Reduction funded transit programs and ensures a successful deployment of these new and continually emerging technologies.

ARB’s own strategies to meet its goals include: ‘Technology development & deployment, zero emission technologies everywhere feasible’ and ‘near zero emission as technology matures’. ARB identifies zero emission buses as a key part of their strategy. SCR TTC contends that if zero emission buses are key to the ARB strategy then industry training has to be acknowledged as key to those technology deployments and that a trained transit workforce contributes to the maturity of these technologies.

SCR TTC is a non-profit grassroots effort conceived over a decade ago by transits in Southern California mandated by the South Coast Air Quality Management District to be the first in the country to procure, maintain, operate and repair low/zero emission buses.

SCR TTC is comprised of 45 members; 30 Transit Agencies and fifteen (15) University and California Community College academic members – **think about that comprehensive composition for a moment. SCR TTC is successful example of what is outlined as an ideal model in all the speeches.**

SCR TTC’s growth and success has been the result of setting standards including one of a true spirit of collaboration. SCR TTC has been a lot of work, over an extended period of time, by a number of dedicated transit industry professionals and their academic partners. The SCR TTC’s mission is to: **Advance the skills of our transit workforce...preparing for the future.**

The SCR TTC’s goals have included the development a new “Learning Model” that increases the professional and technical competency of the Southern California public



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transit workforce. To date SCRTTC has delivered over **65,000 hours of training to over 4,500 transit technicians.**

I proudly bring to your attention that the SCRTTC's "Learning Model" recently won the **2015 National Transit Institute's (NTI) Achievements in Transit Training Model Program Award** and SCRTTC was just recently notified by the California Transit Association (CTA) that it will be recipient of the CTA's **2015 Transit Innovation** award to be presented at the CTA conference in November right here in Pasadena.

SCRTTC funding and leveraged resources has been diverse and included; Member fees, FTA Earmarks, Non-profits grants, California Community College Industry Driven Regional Collaborative (IDRC) grants and 2 FTA Innovative Workforce Development grants. Those FTA grants made SCRTTC the first in the county to transition transit training technical courses accessible to even the most remote rural transits.

While SCRTTC has waited, like everyone else in the country a long term transportation bill not to be passed, California is now in jeopardy of losing the 1 well established transit training resource that is key to the ARB strategy of success.

Consider the diversity of technology topics: CNG, Hydrogen, High Voltage Electric Buses, Fueling Stations, Waste-to-Fuel, and Rapid Charging Systems and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS). These only hit the high notes; the list goes on and grows larger every day.

Transit is also confronting a retiring workforce, other transit specific courses are needed for professional development; Leadership Management, Transition to Supervisor, Transit Budget/Fiscal Management and Procurement Workshops to name a few.

If the training outlined here is not funded, developed and delivered then these workers are set up to fail and the ARB goals will follow suit. Plainly put: You cannot plunk a high voltage system or a highly compressed gas in front of a diesel mechanic without training. It simply isn't safe. Without training people get hurt and the very technologies ARB is trying to deploy are impeded. NASA wouldn't send a rocket to Mars today on the training developed that put a man on the moon in 1969.

In closing please consider the funding investment needed. Help us to advance the skills of our transit workforce so we can prepare for the future. This is the SCRTTC's mission, but with ARB's inclusion of Transit Training and Workforce Development as part of the 2nd Investment plan 40% of the Cap & Trade Discretionary Funds it will prove to be an essential tool to ARB's strategic planning in successfully achieving your goals too.

If you should have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact David Stumpo, Executive Director, at 360-945-2150.

Sincerely,

Tommy Edwards, Chair

cc: Board of Directors
David Stumpo, Executive Director